FOLDER

1

POEMS

JOHN ASHBERY
DAISY ALDAN
GIORGIO CAPRONI
JEAN GARRIGUE
LEON HECHT
KENNETH KOCH
JAMES MERRIL
FRANK O'HARA
ALEXANDER RANDOLPH
JAMES SCHUYLER
EDWIN TREITLER
SANDRA WOOL

A PLAYLET

JAMES SCHUYLER

SHORT STORIES

FREDERICK ENGLISH
GIUSEPPE PATRONI GRIFFI
ROBERT HELLMAN
WILLIAM FENSE WEAVER

THREE ORIGINAL SILK SCREEN PRINTS

GEORGE HARTIGAN

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Daisy Aldan and Richard Miller—editors
William Fense Weaver—foreign editor
Floriano Vecchi—production

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Frank O'Hara

Blocks

1

Yippee! she is shooting in the harbor! he is jumping
up to the maelstrom! she is leaning over the giant's
cart of tears which like a lava cone let fall to fly
from the cross-eyed tantrum-tousled ninth grader's
splayed fist is freezing on the cement! he is throwing
up his arms in heavenly desperation, spacious Y of his
tumultuous love-nerves flailing like a poinsettia in
its own nailish storm against the glass door of the
cumulus which is withholding her from these divine
pastures she has filled with the flesh of men as stones!
O fatal eagerness!

2

O boy, their childhood was like so many oatmeal cookies.
I need you, you need me, yum, yum. Anon it became suddenly.

3

like someone always losing something and never knowing what.
Always so. They were so fond of eating bread and butter and
sugar, they were slobs, the mice used to lick the floorboards
after they went to bed, rolling their light tails against
the rattling marbles of granulation. Vivo! the dextrose
those children consumed, lavished, smoked, in their knobby
candy bars. Such pimples! such hardons! such moody loves.
And thus they grew like giggling fir trees.

Commercial Variations

1
"When you're ready to sell your diamonds
it's time to go to the Empire State Building"
and jump into the 30s like they did in 1929.
Those were desperate days, too, but I'd no more
give up our silver mine, Belle, just because gold
has become the world standard look, than all
your grey hairs, beloved New York from whence
all the loathesome sirens don't call. They would like
to take you away from me wouldn't they? now that the fever's
got me and there're rumors of a Rush in California
and pine fields in Massachusetts as yet unindustrialized.
That's how they act to The American Boy
from Sodom-on-Hudson (non-resident membership
in The Museum of Modern Art) as if it weren't the best
little municipality in the U.S. with real estate
rising like a coloratura, no road signs, and self-plumbing;
and more damned vistas of the tundra than Tivoli
has dolce far niente. It's me, though, not the city —
oh my god don't let them take me away! wire The Times.

2
Last year I entertained I practically serenaded
Zinka Milanov when the Metropolitan Opera Company
(and they know a good thing) came to S-on-H, and now
I'm expected to spend the rest of my days in a north-state
greenhouse where the inhabitants don't even know
that 'The Jewel Song" 's from *Carmen.* They think oi
is short for oysters. I may be tough and selfish, but
what do you expect? my favorite play is *William Tell.*
You can't tell me the city's wicked: I'm wicked.
The difference between your climate and mine is
that up north in the Aurora Borealis the blame falls like rain.
In the city if you're hit in the eye it's the sun
or a fist, no bushing around the truth, whatever that is.
I like it when the days are ducal and you worry fearlessly.
Minding the governor your lover, and the witch your sister,
now they thought of the least common denominator and're dazzling!

3
The sky has opened like a solarium and the artillery
of the pest has peddled into the feathery suffering
its recently published rhymes. How that lavender weeping
and beastly curses would like to claim the soldiers its own,
and turn the "tide" of the war! But they, shining,
mush back to The Trojan Horse, climb up, and ride away.

4
Yes, the mathematicians applauded when the senator
proved that god never sent cablegrams or disappeared
except when voodoo or political expediency flourished,
it being sweet times, in Tammany in the nineties
One thought a good deal then of riding for pleasures
and in the shrubbery of a casual fistfight Vesuvius starting
and screaming creamed rubily as if to flush the heavens.
As the glassy fencing of sunrise in a fish market
cries out its Americanism and jingoes and jolts daily
over the icebergs of our historically wispy possum-drowsy
lack of antiquity we know that art must be vulgar to say
"Never may the dame claim to be warm to the exact,
nor the surburban community amount to anything in any way
that is not a pursuit of the purple vices artsy-craftsy,
the loom in the sitting room where reading is only aloud
and illustrative of campfire meetings beside the Out Doors
where everyone feels as ill at ease as sea food."

Often I think of your voice against the needles of dawn
when the dampness was operatic in Ann Arbor lilacs
and the gold of my flesh had yet to be regimented in freckles.
Now I must face the glass of whatever sliver's my smile,
each day more demanding me for what I have always tossed aside
like listening to *Erwartung* hanging by your thumbs;
I turn grey over night screaming feverishly scoreful, note
for note as I have always believed, for I know what I love
and know what must be trodden under foot to be vindicated
and glorified and praised: Belle of Old New York,
your desperation will never open in *La Forza del Destino*
which was my father's favorite opera when he tried to jump
out a window on New Year's Eve in 1940, thirty days
before I ditched the stable boy who gave me the diamonds
I'm turning in today for a little freedom to travel.

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Sandra Wool

Chloris and Cloe on Jane Street

arise
Arise, my Love; great greet the morning dove
release the pigeons from your hair
Reject the wraiths of childlife; inbreath, bed-wife,
(you know dull) earth like
A wreath of holly fragrancy.
New I and wish and why; itself
Inarming love is adequacy

arose
"Arose, my Love; thrown poppies at the morning dove
dismissed the pigeons from my hair to find
Another home, where still the wraiths of childhood roam
I breathe and wreathe new knots of weed and spring
Unvined from You; honey sing-
ing new saliency of I and lie and do:
Inarming love is adequacy"

John Ashbery

The Grapevine

Of who we and all they are
You all now know. But you know
After they began to find us out we grew
Before they died thinking us the causes

Of their acts. Now we'll not know
The truth of some still at the piano, though
They often date from us, causing
These changes we think we are. We don't care

Though, so tall up there
In young air. But things get darker as we move
To ask them: Whom must we get to know
To die, so you live and we know?

Errors

Jealousy. Whispered weather reports.
In the street we found boxes
Littered with snow, to burn at home.
What flower tolling on the waters
You stupefied me. We waxed,
Carnivores, late and alight
In the beaded winter. All was ominous, luminous.
Beyond the bed's veils the white walls danced
Some violent compunction. Promises,
We thought then of your dry portals,
Bright cornices of eavesdropping palaces,
You were painfully stitched to hours
The moon tears up, scoffing at unrinsed portions.
And loves adopted realm. Flees to water,
The coach dissolving in mists.
A wish
Refines the lines around the mouth
At these ten-year intervals. It fumed
Clear air of wars. It desired
Excess of core in all things. From all things sucked
A glossy denial. But look, pale day:
We fly hence. To return in sketched
In the prophet's silence. Who doubts it is true?

White

The trumpet strikes wonder in the hearts—
Fear of the manure, bed, and bell—
Already these may be contaminated.
The giants their ashen songs wakened
Where the hearts are birthed told
Smeared among tall twigs. For
They are endless, ruinous, licentious
Songs of the past on the flowers anxious faces.

Where is the tempest buttered? The giants
In their yachts have privately forgotten
By which hand slipped under the door
The screaming face. I rode into
The scared dead town, parked the Plymouth—
"Perhaps Pat is dead" but it buckled,
Came on, all puce zones alight
And in the death of muck and horror
Knelt one on the quiet trapeze of the sky.

To shake hands with a strange force
Men talk of masturbation in bars,
Superb tales of charm and force.
Judged useless in the night's strength
The willows and smell of men and women,
The acid of little boys.
The trumpet knows only it ploughs.
Do the willows jump its rancid fist
And the fathers move farther back?

The Way They Took

The green bars on you grew soberer
As I petted the lock, a crank
In my specially built shoes.
We hedged about leisure, feeling walking
That day, that night. The day
Came up. The heads borne in peach vessels
Out of asking that afternoon droned.
He saw the look of some other people,
Huge husks of chattering boys,
Girls unfathomable in lovely dresses
And remorseful and on the edge of darkness.
No firmness in that safe smile ebbing.
Tinkling sadness. The sun pissed on a rock.

That is how I came nearer
To what was on my shoulder. One day
You were ruminating with a friend's mother,
I thought how plebeian this testimony,
You might care to crave that, somehow
Before I would decide. Just think,

But I know how romantic, how they whispered
Under the lace of their aspiring
Opinions. And heaven will not care,
To raise our love
In scathing hymns. So beware and
Bye now. The jewels are for luck.

Giuseppe Patroni Griffi

Poisoned Coffee

HE wasn't the usual man behind the counter who smiles and gossips and says, "Yes, sir. Thank you, sir." Immediately, he impressed people as an independent type. Nice-looking, he could have been a grown man or still a boy, thirty or twenty-four. It doesn't matter. Rather tall, with dark, short curly hair, a chiseled face, young but already marked by long sexual activity. His physique was that of a man who has built his body through devoted exercise until the muscles are calm, trained. The bow-tie, the stiff collar, the formal jacket and shirt were of a cruel white, a freshly-ironed hardness, and his hands—attached to his cuffs—were heavy, dark, always in motion, operating the shining, nickel coffee machine. His hands seemed to live a life of their own, to act of their own accord; and the curved nickel surface reflected them: now long, thin, twisted, now short and fat with huge nails and fingers like barrels. The counter, reflected to infinity in the mirrored walls, hid his legs, which would have been thin and nervous. It doesn't matter. For an attendant in that job what matters is the part offered above the counter; and he was nonchalant, with almost noble gestures which had nothing in common with those of the traditional waiter. He stared at the machine or into the void above the customer's head. He looked rarely and without interest at the hand that held out the check and his tip. If customers stared at him, he wasn't aware of it or pretended not to be, or else he didn't want them to and paid no attention. You could have assumed he was revolted by his work, that his attitude was one of self-sufficiency, that he wanted no confidences from customers; still there was never a line of scorn on his face. Occasionally he spoke to the other men behind the counter, a few words, a half-smile. Sometimes he was shameless and laughed in people's faces, ignoring them at the same time. It was impossible to establish any point of contact with him, and for one customer, who had been coming in regularly around three o'clock, the coffee was turning to poison.

Today this man had come in with his mind made up. He had an idea: to brush the attendant's hand as he gave him the tip. The counterman had never given any sign of noticing him, had looked at him only once, passing his eyes over the man's face without pausing. This had started the whole business.

Yet it was more complicated than it seemed.

—It's not natural to hold the tip in your hand. You put it down on the counter. And what if this bastard does take it out of my hand?

He shuddered at the very thought. He would have shuddered, too, at that contact. He would not debase himself that far.

—Why that far? That's not exactly it. I won't debase myself even a little, in this way.

That wasn't what he was looking for. Still he had to establish a fellow-feeling, even a tacit one, or that coffee would become poison.

He put the tip on the counter with his check and waited like the others. The man worked the nickel machine. When he finished, he picked up the check and the tip and didn't say Thank you; he took another check and tip and said, Thank you, then went back to milking coffee from that metal animal. He hadn't raised his eyes from his work.

—He didn't say Thank you to me. Obviously he has something against me. He dislikes me.

The idea that the man disliked him began to grow. The thought saddened him, and he had not anticipated this sadness. In reality, he would have liked to stroke his nails. But it wasn't even this he wanted. This came later. All he wanted was for them to look at each other. It would have been enough. Anybody can want to look at something he likes.

He drained the cup of poison and went out as the large crystal clock in the room struck three.

He returned the next day. The counterman was there, pumping coffee from the machine. Tip in hand, he would wait there, an hour if necessary. His mind was made up. The counterman could ignore him no longer and finally would have to wait on him. Personal feelings don't count in that type of work, and if the man showed the slightest sign of neglecting him, he would call the manager.

—I could have him discharged, who knows?

He took his check to the counter. Everything went on as usual. Eyes staring beyond the customers' heads, hands moving in nervous starts over the wicked secretions that spurted from the nickel machine.

He was waiting on the customers with his habitual independence.

The customer put his hand, bent slightly outward and holding the tip, on the counter. He waited. His blood ran to his feet. He could have nailed those two restless hands to the machine and watched them die, grow flat and purple, putrefy, dissolve slowly from the spikes—a filthy, dripping cream—and the spikes would remain there alone, lengthened in their nickel reflection, examples of an exemplary punishment.

The man served the others as if he didn't see the hand holding the tip.

He thought of humiliating him. It was a sudden inspiration. He thought of something that would interrupt that rhythm, that would force the counterman to move differently, to make a special gesture, for this customer alone.

"May I have a glass of water?"

His voice came out choked, higher than normal, a little imperious, not the way he wanted it. His cheeks flushed slightly. The attendant raised his head from the machine, his lashes flickered over his grey eyes. He looked at him as if he were

an intruder. He left the cups to be filled under the smoking taps and, with professional motions, gave him a brimming glass.

He drank, dazed. He set the glass down because his hand was trembling. He was about to drop the tip on the counter when, there, without his having noticed any movement, he felt the attendant's hand graze his to take the money. Then he lost control. He abruptly drew back his arm, clutching—along with the tip—that hand. His nails scratched the dark flesh—a feeling of tenderness—and he released his terrified fingers.

The tip fell on the counter. The attendant flexed his hand and looked at the palm. He picked up the check and stuck it on the nail. The customer said weakly: "Excuse me." He wanted to leave. The attendant went back to the gleaming machine, handed him his cup.

—It doesn't matter to him at all. He doesn't even wonder if certain actions are natural or not.

He made up his mind never to set foot in that place again, but at three o'clock the next day, he went in. At first he had tried to give it a wide berth, then—he didn't know how—the circle he was making became a spiral, contracting, and there he was in front of the glass door. He hadn't gone in at once. He had stopped, then gone to buy a newspaper at the stand next door.

—Hit him. Oh, if I could just hit him. If he bothers me today, I'll give him a good slap.

Then he went in.

Erect behind the counter, the man was involved with the coffee machine, white, perfect, his eyes softened by two bluish circles. The customer felt a kind of depression. He paid, took the check, put it on the counter, opened his paper and tried to read. The attendant served him at once.

He was about to lift the cup to his lips when the other man said: "I beg your pardon, but I've forgotten the sugar," and took a spoonful from the shelf behind him and put it in the coffee. The customer stirred it and gulped it down. He went out, wondering how the man could have made such a simple mistake. He had omitted an action that was part of the security of his professional independence. In certain cases, involuntary errors were not credible.

He was convinced now that the two of them would no longer be strangers; but at the corner of the street he was seized by violent cramps in his stomach.

—He's poisoned me.

He was sure of it. His happiness of a moment before vanished. There was no reaching the man behind the counter. And his torment began again.

Translated by William Fense Weaver

Edwin Treitler

we take in dogs
and birds that we wish to kill
we tried stopping the bird's breath
but we have to wait —
the rabbits should be dead
oh I should say by tonight
when I bring home some white mice
which we shall let die of starvation
right next to the fishes swimming
in the seltzer-water
we lost much more than what we have now
but we keep finding things of no use
and let them die with us
better than if they should die alone
I do not want you to understand me
I only ask for your indulgence
and your secret possessions.

the ruined footsteps

the ruined footsteps
melt
as they cage themselves
in flowers.
for you have no beginning.
there is no path
back to the jealous child,
the selfish form wanting
to put you
into his body
is calling prayers out
to winter.
and winter is the month
from touch to touch
misunderstanding my face
made of petals,
blown all over the fountains
that are swimming
in emotion.
the chairs fall
over the grass,
and all i see
are the clouds
turning their heads
to make me die.
now i do not know
whom the rain
— has buried —

all the winter
has gone
into ivory
and every melody
into finale.
now is the time
to pity my shadow
hanging upside down
in the leaves.
the painless leaves
forming a loose carpet
that shakes into flight
at the
least sound
the dawn should make.
every hand
is a motion
without meaning
for i am cold
in the dream of youth.
winter has done this,
with its lips
—that only speak once.—

the torture rack

the torture rack can be in moonlight
a bed for lovers
separate on a dimensionless stage
with one light from the side
allowing the wind its exit.
the ground is dry and the stones ever cleaving
bar the mental frenzy to touch.
below
below is the magic word.
but when we are hot and dry
then the wind cannot leave
nor can we
heavy with grapes
bringing them to be crushed
not dead or wished of life
but receding to the door bell.
watch the last curtain fall
and then the first glide into manner —
do we forget
we were born
filled with the useful
we attain uselessness at the colosseum
but we can never go in the boat that sinks
and we never go
for our return has not been planned.
I suffer when I strain at memory who stands before me at the present.
one moment more
disuse
I will come
torn as a woodland blossom
devoured by myself
I shall split in half, the bottom shall seek its torture
and the top madden with vermillion hair.

Alexander Randolph

Fireworks, San Giovanni

The mouth that hisses for silence

and rises

and rises

(The sky is full of frightened horses)

and falls

and falls

Into their open voices

(The Saints of Firelight explode

in parachuted kisses)

James Schuyler

SHOPPING AND WAITING

a dramatic pause

The scene is a shop. At rise a clerk is waiting on a shopper.

CLERK Boys' toys or girls' curls?
SHOPPER What color curls you got?
CLERK We carry only our own make curls, bleached goat, flatters any pigmentation.
SHOPPER I want to see a toy a for a boy.
CLERK How old of a boy?
SHOPPER Why?
CLERK How should I know what age group toys to show you if I don't know his age group?
SHOPPER Who says he's a he?
CLERK You said for a boy.
SHOPPER Maybe it's for a girl who likes boy's toys. Show me some. He likes the same type toys I like.
CLERK How old are you?
SHOPPER A wind-up bird. I want to see a wind-up bird, and a putt-putt and a picture book that makes sounds like the pictures when you turn the pages.
CLERK Here you are. (enter another shopper) What may I help you with?
2nd SHOPPER A pint of sweet milk, a family size box Snapees and what do you get for your rat cheese?
CLERK We're not a grocer's.
2nd SHOPPER What kind of a store is this?
CLERK Here's a nice grocer's-type novelty, peanut butter cracker sandwiches made out of soap can't tell 'em from the real thing. Kid your friends! Fun for the bath! Always a laugh! Soap-Snacks.

(the 1st Shopper is turning the pages of the book. First there is the sound of a baby crying, then of a lion roaring, then of eating)

1st SHOPPER I don't think this is such a nice book. It could give somebody a serious scare.
CLERK Now look, suppose I told you this child you're shopping for is this minute at a Saturday matinee in a burning theatre to be known after today as the greatest metropolitan disaster of modern times?
1st SHOPPER Go on.

CLERK Or that the sewer gas has backed out of your kitchen sink drain and knocked your wife flat on the linoleum?

2nd SHOPPER I don't think these soap sandwiches taste so good. They could make somebody seriously sick.

CLERK There'll be snow on the roof tonight.

2nd SHOPPER Isn't this shop a funny little shop?

1st SHOPPER I came in to get off the street. I might as well have stayed where I was. This place makes me feel I had been in it all my life and hated it.

2ndSHOPPER I remember I meant to buy some glasses but I can't remember which kind.

CLERK Here is a tree you might like to see. It talks, if you get your face in it.

1st SHOPPER Let's hear. (puts face in and listens, then withdraws). It said "Bleachers" and screamed.

2nd SHOPPER If it screamed I didn't hear it. (puts face in tree and withdraws it with a cry). It bit me.

CLERK It bites. We could sell you some anti-venom.

2nd SHOPPER I wouldn't want to die of a tree bite. How much?

CLERK What's it worth to you?

2nd SHOPPER It hasn't got a price?

CLERK Yes, it has. The price varies.

2nd SHOPPER Could I buy this much worth?

CLERK Yes you may. Here you are and here is your change.

1st SHOPPER How can you get anti-venom out of a stone?

2nd SHOPPER Should I swallow such a big stone?

CLERK Hold it in your hand. No, in the other hand, the same side as the side of your face the tree bit. It draws the poison. How would either of you like a Down Goes McGinty?

1st SHOPPER I was brought up on one. I think after all I want this mean book. It seems to have a lesson about life in it. Instructive for the kiddies.

2nd SHOPPER If it's for a kiddie why don't you get a paint box and a color book?

1st SHOPPER You want this book don't you?

2nd SHOPPER Only if you don't.

1st SHOPPER I do.

CLERK What for? Do you think I made it up about the matinee fire? Listen. (a newsboy is heard passing shouting, "Greatest metropolitan disaster of modern times!")

1st SHOPPER I got to use your phone!

CLERK We haven't got a phone. Besides, do you think your wife could get up off the linoleum to answer it?
(the first shopper rushes out of the shop)

CLERK May I wrap the book as a gift and would you care to put in a card?

2nd SHOPPER Don't bother, I'll just take it. It's for me.

CLERK At least you'd better let me put it in a bag, it's started snowing.

2nd SHOPPER Why, so it is.

James Schuyler

Royals

Called dog men,
they go out and have encounters.
Their blue eyes pick up and discharge
the green of their jackets, or jerkins.
Men with clear green eyes unnerve angels.

Or perhaps they are unnerving as angels.
It is certain they are not angels.
They may be of another order,
between us and heaven like the atmosphere
between us and the sky, appointed
to clarify death-bed facts.
Unable to talk with us,
they know about us and argue about the facts
and the motives we may not know ourselves.
Their arguing might be clarifying
to those who know them whom they do not know
as they know us who do not know them.
We see them of course,
talk with them and even touch them,
are struck by their glances.
We show them our secret, however ill-kept.
They tell us nothing about themselves.
They seem to tell us everything,
what they are is obvious when we see them.
We accept as facts our conjectures about them
we were not aware we had made.
They help make real our conjectures.

They live in rooms around town
and perhaps are what we become for a part of life
without knowing afterward.
This is no stranger than their rooms,
the inside of a cloud of red dust (it is, however, a room),
a room grown with lichens with a moon in it,
or wherever we pass them, or a roof.

Daisy Aldan

Love poem

My love in green grease paint for horror
unfolds in silent halls where vacuum listens.
No spotlight glistens
the spangles; its lengthening shadow
creeps toward lean and cardboard trees
which tip toward tragic
caverns where barren silence echoes;
Sleep's sorcerers execute magic
and my arms legs encircle conjured unrealities.
Loneliness rides an empty calliope
in stage center. This curtain will never
descend, and the denouement never collide
with the conclusion; here is forever.
I (not you), audience in a dusty time,
will hollowly weep and applaud
this sublime, this subliminal pantomime.
Masks (mine) adorn the wings. One laughs
for a day. Outstretched fingers cover half
grotesque Sorrow's reversed grin. My prop
lush paper flower, withers, grows thin.
I love you lies crumpled and discarded
read backward in a broken mirror.

about a plane

Certain propellor
turns whirsand whirls
upward in twirl
substance into light
whose invisible blades
cleave night.
Now the glide easy and elastic
and the rolling, the sweep and soar

See how the wheels
are bird-infolding
while trees and farewells
fall away
reeling.
Now the throb and the roar,
the purr drone and whine whine whine
and the flir.
How dynamic (defined
controlled by pilot mind)

is the noble immobile advance
above the floor of cloud
whose phosphorescent mass
is illusory spectral
among the stars
which bound into the dark.
There glows the slant-eyed crescent
moon mirroring wings and boomerangs;
the orange dash of engine flame,
silver and night-framed.

Deluded to the concrete,
we do not mark
below
where
softly
rocks and waits
the WHALE.

THAT LAST BLAST

1.
that last blast scatters a temporary equilibrium hair stands
on end medusa distorts agony smiting helplessly conformity
christ the poet is suspect again taunted by harpies
for the buildings bulge split crash and shatter slow . . .
silently in undirected direction

2.
now hidden dragons cry fear fume fiery before
the stone hearts the chess players
no ever burial for these reasonless who gyrate
to a subtle pounding ten torso beasts await
the tone or merest gesture to flame
awaken screeching macaws who inhabit that chamber
flap frenzied wings and caw caw

3.
now stalk the humorless the zombies
carrying umbrellas snow has closed the nightclubs
now streaming into the hot afternoon cat screeches
droopers swoon against the brownstone stoop a cockroach creeps
daintily up the lamppost the paint is cracked in blistered
irridescence calamity cries help from a green window while
hands turn ragged kites scum in the puddles and drainpipes

4.
suddenly issuing from a sharp V melodious glorious exquisitely
lavender and defined caroling throbbing the universe into
dawn

mr. and mrs. SEAL
central park ny

O
you snoring
fat sighing comedian
SEAL you sleek wet
lounger, slick mirror of clouds
sky, sleep your seal sleep, dream
your bad seal dreams (growl)
quiver those stiff pointed
ivory whiskers Clubman!
And huddler
cuddler
lazy coddled
queen prima donna
flip flap flop perform
your boneless backbends, waddle onstage
idly contemplate duplicate your laughing public
clap your counterfeit wing hands.
And do you now
spout (suddenly) drenching
snorted water
scattering?
O you
boomerang who laughs
last! Did you burp?

Frederick English

Horizon Boy

THE EARLY AUTUMN SUN had slipped beyond the classroom washing westward over the azure sky with its Indian summer warmth. The boy had left the classroom and a fourth grade that was smudgy with the odor of learning where all the world became circles in ink and sifting chalk dust and a metal globe of many colors that revolved about the sun. He left the school building and in the school bus heard and joined the laughter of freedom which came after a day when voice and body had forgotten the sun and air and the sound of the sea roaring or slipping with its changing colors and the games played and the castles built on the edge of happy defeat, and he had sat and listened to Miss Collins and held his body firmly on the side of a funny curl that flew from the tangled hair of Miss Collins' graying head.

He left the bus when it stopped at the narrow road that led to the small framehouse at the edge of the marsh grass where he lived with his mother and the sounds of the sea, and the sound of the shutter when the salt wind tumbled about the house and made his room in the night a ship in a raging storm. He lived too with a shadow weight of memory that tied the night together with another's presence who was far distant in a land where no sea slept.

When he reached the house he stopped before entering and looked out at the green marsh grass that the soft autumn breeze made alive and that whispered in a language only the sea could understand, and out beyond the whispering marsh grass to the sea that caught and sped the sun toward land, toward the narrow strand of beach white with the sun, and at the seagulls that had slipped through his childhood in light of play and in night dreams when they spoke, and he would run in thick night fright until a hand on his forehead awoke him to a shadow form and he knew the sea was there beyond the shadow beyond the room where the seagulls alive with light flew and where they slept beneath the horizon of night.

He entered the house. His mother was sitting on a sofa in the living room, as still as a monument frozen to the tears that flowed with no sobs down her cheeks, as still as if all her life had been but a preparation to become a monument in a room that tasted of the sea. In her hand she held the yellow paper that trembling hands had opened, hands that the sun salt wind had lent the determination of the sea. The words had been simple. And she had sat on the sofa still with no movement but the tears that flowed from memory and the telegram was limp in the hand that rested on a knee.

The boy entered the room. He stood and for a moment did not speak before this stranger still with strange flowing tears that was his mother but who spoke only a language of silent tears. —What is the matter? he asked. His mother did not answer and he walked closer to fear and saw the telegram and aged in a moment of still fear he took it from a mother's hand that had not moved and who let it slip without sound from her fingers. And he read it.

He dropped the yellow paper to the floor where on a daddy he had ridden through the jungles of Africa and had shot at wild beasts that moved in fuzzy silence on the rug. He looked at a mother who sat distant in tears and stillness, but he did not speak. He turned and ran from the house along the path that had held a hand big and warm to the boardwalk that had skipped with sound in days past when the sun had been human with warmth. Now he ran along the boardwalk with his footsteps tumbling in solid space. The boardwalk ran over the marsh where the green strong grass whispered to the sea in words no boy could understand. It led to the beach sand sun white where the waves slipped softly for the day was calm with no sound of the tearing wind or the heavy crumbling waves, but only the sound of a boy running toward the murmuring sea on the worn planks of the boardwalk.

The horizon boy in green and blue runs, running toward a sea he can never embrace, with memory clutching in his throat, and Miss Collins spun the metal globe of many colors. She explained that the world was divided into land and water and many countries and many peoples. But the hands strong had lifted him to the sky and explained the world in a smile. Oh around the khaki uniform he had danced and, —My father is a soldier, and everyone had listened. But it hadn't been printed on the globe of many colors that Miss Collins spun and called the world. It revolved about the sun she said, but the sun had been the hands that splashed the light filled water and oh all the laughing. Oh the laughter that picked him up and tossed him inside and they had laughed as one, and they made a new world of giddy sky blue space with walls of happy sound. But the walls crumbled within circles in ink and the globe where Miss Collins had pointed out the names spun in his head. It was all brown dirt streaked with the sound of blood.

The boy ran from the boardwalk onto the sand white with the sun and running down the beach he ran through the choking tides of memory. Oh the footsteps in the night that would tuck blankets about his chin he would snuggle beneath the

touch. There had been the day when he first felt the sea moving beneath him in the boat that a steady sun browned hand had steered. He had watched and smiled with the delight of equality that a smile and a motion of the hand gave to him, and had himself steered the boat with the pressure of hands now soiled by distant dirt upon his own. There had been the stories of the sea at night in his room before he slept when the splattering rain and wind and the sea moaning in the distance made real the tales of shipwrecks and of men who fought the sea as if it were alive with solid might. And his mother had said that when a father who wore the sad smile of a uniform came back he would have other stories to tell and the boy had lain at night creating a presence and stories of mountains that were conquered by a single hero. A distant land was a little spot of metal of a different color where there was no odor of salt and no sea playing with the sun and no grass whispering alive with the wind from off the sea.

He ran toward the end of the beach where the seagulls stood quietly expectant waiting for some fish to fly to a stomach. He ran toward them and screamed from his sobbing throat, — Fly birds! Fly! He rushed toward them waving his arms shouting hoarsely, — Fly! Fly! The birds swept with disdainful dignity into flight and circled above him, above a world that had split a globe of many colors into a body that was dead in a distant land of dirt where the trees were bare and life was a bullet. He stared up at the birds that were free and alive in the sun and he screamed and snatched sea shells and pebbles and threw them to the sky. The birds glided in effortless space to a distant part of the beach. And the boy fell on the beach and clutched the sun sand and sobbed.

He cried with a world beyond that had crept within his sob sick stomach. For the world beyond had held a presence he knew and even though dead it sifted through its distant soil. A boy lies on a stretch of sand that the sea touches with soft sound, where behind the sand the marsh grass grows with the wind and behind the grass a house where a mother sits still with tears of loss. The boy with the sobs that wash over a metal globe of many colors that has spun so prettily is alive with sobbing flesh at the blood that covered a hero who in the night had said, — Sleep tight.

There on the warm sand beneath the sun he lay, still as another he had left in a room with no sound but the silent tears of memory. His tears washed a memory to the reality of a voice that had said no words and of a presence that had been colored by the night and by the sun and by the sickness that had blurred existence, but over his bed he had known the two who had enclosed arms about one another and the touch of two hands that had smoothed the perspiration soaked hair from his forehead.

He sat up and looked down the beach at the sun gulls, but their movement now only stirred the sky with memory. He looked out at the sea where the sun skipped toward shore and beyond the sea was land that poured over memory. Playing a summer game he had hidden in the tree behind the sun green leaves and looked at a backyard over which he had flown at a tremendous speed soon to arrive at some far away jungle. And into this world that skimmed by with every movement of his eyes there had come two giants who stood beneath his speeding plane. They spoke with laughter and no words and their arms together. He fired a friendly shot and leapt from his plane that was a shady tree again in a yard against the sea into their arms of love.

Oh by the sliding sun sea beyond the gulls that moved with floating ease he saw the hand and love of another that the earth and day covered with a sad decay that swept oceans and worlds within his brain. And the figure in the room

of silence had been silent with the silence of love.

He got up and ran back along the sand toward the boardwalk running now in the presence of the sun that sent a random shadow of the present flying beside him. He ran down the boardwalk toward still love he would awaken with touch, running from the sea sound of moving eternity with colors of moving flesh that had been a metal globe and only a decoration toward empty knowledge in a classroom where the walls had been strong against the human cry of a gull that sounded as a baby and against the horizon sound of a world that now had crumbled and become a world of people who saw not the sea nor the moving air of love. When he reached the house he entered and walked softly so as not to disturb a sound of love that silence lent life and walked toward a mother and rested his head on her lap. The child cried still, but with tears that flowed beyond a present and over a globe of many colors that revolved with a reality of meaning. And together for a moment they wept until she took his head between her hands and kissed him upon the forehead. — My little Johnny. My little Johnny. Then she moved his head from her lap to the sofa and got up and went to the kitchen and began to prepare dinner.

And beyond the window, beyond the sound of the strong pouring bubbling water in the sink, beyond the tear reddened eyes of a boy who sat with the past choking in his throat and who followed now the tear blurred movement of a mother preparing a new day, beyond all this room as in years past and in years to come the autumn sun slipped beneath the waves coloring them with its vanishing.

And sweeping the horizon were the shadows of memory.

James Merrill

TWO CHORES

WATER BOILING

When Polly's reddening hand
Let fall into the kettle
The greenest few of all
Her backyard's victuals

Which early underground
Imbibed from the hot metals
A cooking lacking little
To set them on her table

How while each knowing bubble
Jolted ebulliently
Good it felt to be going
At last where the ideal

Erupting of an eyeball
That dwelt more than its fill
On summer's flame shall scour
The kitchen from the hill!

NIGHT LAUNDRY

Of daily soilure laving
Fabric of all and sundry
With no time for believing
Loving might work the wonder

Who among clouded linen
Has scattered blueing then
Well over wrist in grieving
Dismissed all but the doing

May see to clotheslines later
A week of swans depending
From wooden beaks take flight
Flapping at dawn from water's

Jewel of the first water
And every dismal matter's
Absorption in its cleansing
Bring the new day to light.

Robert Hellman

WHAT HAPPENED TO MRS. KATZ

Jesus! Jesus Christ Almighty! Here I am walking down this street, this street where I was born, where Mrs. Katz was murdered one summer evening. What? There is always this bubble bursting in me and reforming again as at the end of a leaky faucet—sometimes Jesus Christ and sometimes Wow! one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. Or sometimes no bubble but a dead drop of water—some phrase out of a newspaper perhaps—what was it? Shot and killed. That is, not only shot but killed. Or killed how? Shot. Shot, bang! dead. Mrs. Katz was stabbed. Something hard to see the end of, stabbing—operatic. She falls, she lifts herself, she bleeds, groans a last groan, groans again. Clutching, the kitchen table, she lets herself down. My God! What have I done! Oh Max, you've killed me. Bertha, Bertha darling! Please don't die, Bertha dear! Oh Max! How long can they go on screaming at each other? When will he make for the window and run down the fire-escape? He couldn't manage to lower the rusted iron ladder and had to jump from the first floor. Here on this very street—where I was born of course. Mr. Katz, hatless, in his shirtsleeves, rolled over once on the sidewalk, knocking down little Herby Posener, who was watching the ants eat a caterpillar. Got up and ran, just as Mr. Berman and a policeman came out of Mr. Berman's corner grocery store. The policeman pulled his revolver but Mr. Berman recognized Mr. Katz. You're sure he lives there? said the policeman. Yes, but why should he climb down fire-escapes?

One had to tack these things down. You couldn't have an event fluttering, snapping, tearing itself, like a window shade on a windy day. All these exclamations. Wow! It dawns on me. Jesus Christ! A hundred and seventy-five thousand, seven hundred and eighty-five dollars! The exact sum only bigger. Or those sad explanatory statements. Shot and killed. Born on this street. In the year 1925. Even Mr. Katz, once he'd settled into his breathless jog-trot up Westchester Avenue, must have said, My God! I've killed her, my own wife, my poor Bertha, I've killed my wife. My wife! By the time he got to Southern Boulevard long strings of foamy saliva blew out from his chin to his shirt collar. He couldn't run any more. He gave himself up to the traffic cop. A wild-eyed hatless man—those were the days non-murderers or professional murderers wore hats—rushed through the traffic of that busy intersection yesterday evening at six-thirty and stammered an incoherent story to traffic officer John Walsh.

But before that Mrs. Katz had crawled to the window and lifted herself to bleed on the sill. Good people! she screamed, kind neighbors, help me! Oh dear God, help me! Little Herby had hurt his head on the corner of a brick and his hand had come down on the world he was watching. A trickle of blood ran along the rim of his right ear and the palm of his hand was smeared with the yellow blood and guts of the caterpillar. Several wounded ants struggled to extricate themselves. Mrs. Posener was looking out of the third floor window but her head was turned up to see Mrs. Katz. Little Herby sat and cried. He held his sullied hand out first to the policeman and then to Mr. Berman, as one after the other ran up the front steps. All the heads were out of the windows. Kind people! Uh! Oh—she slid back from the sill.

Now is she dead? Will Mr. Berman come to the window and inform the neighbors? No, he and the policeman are pounding on the door. All the tenants of the fourth floor have come out to help them. The ones whose windows give on the back alley are asking questions. The fifth floor comes booming down the iron steps, the others rush up. Mrs. Posener pulls her head in and moves to join them. A crowd is collecting at the street entrance and Mr. Schmidt, the janitor, is already there to keep them out. Only Herby sits holding his hand up to the fire-escape. He is crying almost silently with wide open mouth. Maaa, Maaaahaaa—impossible to hear him at a distance of six feet—even if there weren't all that noise of questions at the doorway. What is it? What happened? It's Mrs. Katz. She had an attack?

Yes, she had an attack of murder—instead of gall bladder. The blood she must have left everywhere! For while they pound on the door and yell about locksmiths and axes, she has revived again and is dragging herself down the long dark hallway. Meanwhile Mr. Posener has come home from work. His jacket is hung over his arm and his shirt collar is spread open—he always comes home in a sweat from the subway ride. He turns a little pale when he sees the crowd at the door. He tries to push through. He calls to Mr. Schmidt. What is it? What happened? Paaaah! Herby has found his voice. Everyone at the door turns with Mr. Posener. Herby is still holding up the unclean hand. Mr. Posener stands staring at him. What is it? Where is my wife? he asks Mr. Schmidt who has come down from the stoop. Everybody gathers around Herby but nobody touches him, nobody will wipe his hand. His father bends and tries to pull him up. Herby lets himself be dragged along the ground and cries still louder. Finally Mr. Posener understands about the hand. He pulls out his handkerchief and wipes it clean. What happened? Where's Momma? A confused keening of women echoes in the corridors of the tenement. Everybody leaves Herby to make for the doorway again but Mr. Schmidt gets there first. Mr. Posener squats stiff and terrified holding his son's wrist. Herby tries to pull away and his father

turns and notices the blood on his ear. What happened? Who hurt you? Mr. Kaa-a-atz! Mr. Katz? He hit me—with a knife. With a knife? There is another long groan from inside, accompanied this time by a police siren around the corner. Just as Mr. Berman breaks through the crowd, the ambulance and the police car pull in at the curb. Mr. Posener abandons his son and runs after Mr. Berman who is leading the interns and the police sergeant up the steps. The cops begin to disperse the crowd. Mr. Berman! Mr. Berman! Who is it? What happened? Mr. Berman has no time. In the doorway he turns to make the official announcement. She's dead. Who? Who's dead?

Mrs. Katz is dead. She died in 1925. Shot and killed—no, stabbed. On her knees she managed to open the door, then pitched over the threshold and coughed up a little puddle of blood. Mr. Berman and the policeman and somebody else—she was a big woman—carried her back into the house. When they got her to the bed she was dead. That was about five minutes after her husband was arrested. But Mr. Katz sat for more than an hour on the police station bench, his hands on his knees, his head down, rocking himself slightly and mumbling under his breath like an old Jew in the synagogue. Things went on around Mr. Katz as they go on around the people in the waiting room of the clinic or the little boy in the principal's office. The fat captain at the desk shuffled his papers and talked through the telephone. A patrolman went clacking across the stone floor. Doors opened and shut briskly. Suddenly, in a moment of quiet, while the police captain bent over his scratching pen and the cop at the wide entrance absently scratched under his stiff cap, Mr. Katz started violently and stared up at the ceiling. What? What was it? Was he almost finding it? Jesus Christ—no, he wouldn't have said that—My God! One hundred and seventy-five thous—. The captain raised his head and gazed at him dispassionately. No, no, Mr. Katz sank back again—no, it was something else.

It was Mr. Berman who finally got through to Mrs. Katz' son, the lawyer from Bensonhurst. It was in Mrs. Malley's living room. Mr. Posener stood in the doorway calling his wife from the crowd of neighbors around the telephone. Mr. Berman waved his hand behind his back for silence.

—Hello! he shouted, I want Morton Katz, the Counsellor Katz. Yes?

Reluctantly Mrs. Posener came away. When Herby saw her he began to cry all over again. She was impatient, she wanted to hear Mr. Berman.

—What? What is it?

—Come upstairs already, Mr. Posener whispered. What do you want to mix in for?

—Shh!

—Yes, a bad accident. He should come right away. Hello! Hello, Morty?

Mrs. Posener put her hand up to cover her gasp. The neighbors turned their faces to one another, all vying in their grasp and expression of the moment's tragic significance. Only Herby kept crying and reaching up his hand to show his mother.

—Listen Morty, Mr. Berman lowered his voice gently, you'd better come right away.

—What? I said you'd better come right away, he yelled. Yes, it's an accident. No, I can't tell you over the phone. All right. All right. Right away.

Mr. Posener drew his wife up the stairs. Mr. Berman came out wiping the sweat from his face.

—He's coming.

—My God! What a calamity!

—You think he'll take the case, Mr. Berman?

—What case? They'll just put him in an institution. He's crazy.

—Ma! Maa! Wash it! Herby held up his hand. It was dry but still slightly stained with yellow.

—All right, all right, I'll wash it—Then bending down, What happened to your ear?

—He says Mr. Katz hit him.

—Mr. Katz?

Herby looked around at all the questioning faces and burst out bawling.

—I wanna go upstairs. I want you should wa-a-sh it.

Mr. Berman bent over him.

—Don't cry, Herby. You know what I'll give you, Herby? Tomorrow you'll come in my store and I'll give you a chocolate marshmallow cake. Only tell me what happened. He hit you?

—I don't want a cake. Maah!

—Shah, shah. Mr. Posener picked him up. I'll wash it nice with alcohol.

—No, not with alcohol. It burns.

—All right, with water then. Tell Mamma what happened.

—He jumped on top of me, Herby sobbed into her bosom.

—And then what'd he do?

—He hit meee!

—With his hand?

—No-o, with a kna-ife.

—Oy, My God!

—With the same knife you think?

Mr. Berman shook his head.

—No, it was on the floor in the kitchen.

—A crazy man! My God!

Mrs. Posener ran upstairs with Herby bawling over her shoulder.

—Wash it good, Mrs. Posener.

—Not with alcohol! I don' wanno alcohol!

—All right, all right.

After Herby had been washed and put to bed the doorbell rang.

Herby heard from the bedroom. It was Uncle Sam.

—What a calamity!

—What calamity? Uncle Sam said blankly. You mean the robbery?

—A robbery?

—Yes, they stole from a bank on 96th Street—one hundred and—

—No, no, it's Mrs. Katz.

—What happened to Mrs. Katz?

Herby listened but they began to whisper. Mr. Katz stole something from Mrs. Katz and then he ran away down the fire-escape. In the dark Herby lifted his hand and sniffed at it. It smelled of soap. He was a bad man. God would punish him. What? the caterpillar.

—Maa! he called softly.

—What's the matter? His mother opened the door.

—Is it clean now?

—Yes, yes, it's clean. Go to sleep.

Right here on this street. In 1925. The day of the big robbery.

Leon Hecht

we bear likeness.
a confusing light set deep into our foreheads
that goes on and off irregularly
and scientists cannot discover its origin.
we wear masks to conceal this light,
and sometimes we drape our long hair
over the hole to conceal the light.
our mouths are those of birds
and we chirp in strange fashion.
the scientists cannot discover its origin.
we wear veils of velvet to conceal our mouths
but they protrude and we are asked to stand forth
and reveal our faces.
as for the rest of our bodies
we are just as anyone else might be.

1000s of drops.
points.
sharp golds sparkled at my reflection
back in the distance mirror.
sweet sounds and song bladed and marched to the hill
and there turned
and rose in smokes.

i have set in the horizon a thought and added all color.

before this sunset
a man grows older
and a young bird weeps
upon a sorrowful lip.

blue.
the straw cracks in crinkles as it would in fire.
"clang your music and take away the past"

lying flat.
straight across the straw bed.

no glass to control the heart.
for miles through toward stars
to the heaven heaven.

to all that gains from us the glass has split
and when i stand and gaze into the mirror
my right eye is high
and the left eye of my face
seems sunken.

"music from the horizon!"

the left ear stretches and leaves are new.

like a young rose clinging to its thorns

as i cover all my 2 eyes from the 1000
bronze faces
in the points.

it was tomorrow. he rose.
the straw broken around his body

his shadow still in death.
quite silently
the leaves
stole into the wind
as all leaves do
now or later as in the past.

their heads do not turn
after turning in the wind
in the swirls
large enough
to capture 1000 worlds.

when i was a child
i would stand in the center of the swirls
of yellow leaves
and hope that the wind
would snatch my heels.

(i would cover my eyes.)
the leaves
stopped their turning
at my intrusion
and the yellow turned to straw

my shadow parts the leaves.
then when reality leadens the leaves
i open my cactus-like eyes.

meny imes we boys jumped d trucks
t get int town but dis tam was dynmite
y see we dint know da dis ere truck
waz filled wit sugar pralines takn
fm d candy citchen on main stree
sure its pleny a times we itch int
d city at way anow juz az we wa hedin
fo d bridge das d ol black riva bridge
a bunch a cops sart hedn us off dose
friggen cops.
SURE YEAH DEM FRIGGEN COPS
well anow we gaz ad t bead it bfor we
ot pickt up too we walked d rest a d
way in dat stinkin sun.

god am at candy cook.

---

i Saw JoHNy s partY.
jOhNy s parTy WAS
sWell!!
wonderful BIRthday candles
thERe waS a big Fire
at ThE pArty.
We had bALLoonS
canDY
and DAD asked ME IF THERE WERE ANY LITTLE GIRLS
AND I SAID MAYBE?
the Fire was Big.
THe fire MEn caMe
buT it was TOO LatE already maRY waS blaCK and i heard
imogene sCREAmiNG mary was on the FlooR.
we had bordeN S ICE CreAm anD CANdy.
sOME ParTY!

Jean Garrigue

Experiment in Speech

Sooner or later we are all sold, sold to the devil.
"No one can possibly know as much about this as I,"
says the atheist free-thinker. A crank and an ill-
bred reader. Free-thinker indeed! In this old age,
gone down the river.

In the personal summer of exile, the schooners came
up the mouth of the bay and a second okapi arrived
wrapped in leaves, air-borne from Africa. Picked as
an escort for the berating male celibate too long in
captivity, it was discovered too late that the natives
had cheated. She was a male! Two males together, in
secular hatred, sexual, consextual . . . Thus are our
cleverest officials markedly tricked, but as though
the leopard damned for its spots should roar for the
stripes of the zebra or tulip!

After a great strife some death, some okapis recuperating
for the next push. O the schooners depart in a swell
of banana leaves and crocodile dung, sumptuous as a full-
bottomed woman, waters glass-grey, turned-over silken.
Boys in the rigging, skinny as monkeys, are hands over
hands. But that wasn't heaven.

Or from this point to the other, a free point in space,
and the alignments between stars on that projection of
consciousness your map, a chart of the spaces between
steps or stars. While those refusing to accept the
indistinct nature of fate lacerate, as though the
farthest pastures weren't wet! Don't cry! It is Chinese
torture. Don't die! Boil it, boil it—or dish it up.

Thus frequently, when the familiar anxiety begins, the
object is: how to stop it, by what natural condiments
that will improve the difficult set of bestopped reactions.
And the pistols in braces comprehend not. The lone picador,
stabbing his heart twice daily with injections of nervous
fluid, consciousness, conscientiousness, the scrupulous
struggle not to think on that, or to be divided in his
attention, has always to break ranks, to infiltrate through,
to reach to the center where speech is 'the life of thought.'

Language of war, not peace, of struggle and never accomplishment . . .

The Doctor Who Becomes Dark at Day
Praises the Not Really Dark Lady

In the middle of day or the noon of night
Kits love milk and their mothers love fur.
This is the tale of three loves more.

Call them the Doctor, the Child and the Lady
Taking the air to discuss their plight.
Of such is the color of true love's right,
A washable black that will turn light.

The lady loves roses and eyeful throngs
While as for the child on fragrant stem
Like an eminent mother crooning her gem
Of crinkeldy paper and diadem

Or as for the Doctor of motions droll—
Oh his cheeks of white and ironical soul!—
(Not to mention the kits in a basket neat
Lugged by the lady with whiskers compleat)

But hark to their torrent of parley-voo—
Three talking like one, that symbolical crew
As under the cropped plane trees they stroll
With symptoms of true love wherever they go—

For such has the dilemma of true hearts spoken
A ruseful gait is the only love-token,
And the lips forsworn are love's one favor,
As subtle as theft, that theatric palaver—

Sweet doves sweet doves, my ring-necked loves
Sang the lady of mournful hue
While the magical doctor smote his thigh
With Napoleonic rue.

The child continued to coo-coo-coo
Over her beetle from Bundledoo . . .
But pebbly paths where the gillyvors
Leaned out to pluck at a plume

And wallflowers swayed at the ghastly head
Of the insect thing the silly child hugged
Alarmed those three and the Garden too.
Up rose the tocos with eyes buttoned on.

Out came the toucans with scimitar hooks.
A wind arose and the rain came down.
Oh what a sight with green hair brown
And the baby away to less than a bone!

The lady screams and the doctor croaks:
'True love is lost and my days of woe
Outnumber my days of grace!' and spat!
And turned on the kits like a terrible cat!

The green child sank to the ground and lo!
A rose was the remnant of her woe.
While love's true aces lay in a swound,
The pathetic timbre of triumph's abound

And a crumpet or two and a trump up the sleeve
But the shade of a shade on a country wreathe
Nor roiled with the leaves when the wind was small
Nor echoed that littlest horn of all:

'Higgeldy Pauper loves Niggeldy Boo,
Joker loves Wembly, whobody loves loo?
Whobody loves allbody, too roo, too roo?'

William Fense Weaver

A Family Matter

Mother did her best to be brave; but though she tried not to reveal it to the children, she was naturally very deeply concerned, since rumor— practically their only source of information on the subject— had it that the disease was hereditary.

"He can't have got it from your father," she said one evening after dinner, taking advantage of Harry's momentary absence to speak of it, "he was always like a mouse, the poor man. And yet... and yet, what other explanation is there?"

"It's the only possible explanation," Douglas said, "but still that doesn't help to—"

Harry returned at that very moment, and Douglas had to finish the sentence differently. The conversation stopped.

The rest of them looked at their brother, who settled himself comfortably in his chair beside the fireplace, opening the book he had left the room to find. Harry had all the family features: the straight nose, the blond hair, the deep-set eyes, and above all that certain grace, that charm which all of them possessed, and possessed proudly, regarding this indefinable gift as the special property of every Virginia family of station.

But as they observed Harry tonight, deep in his book and unconscious of their scrutiny, they took no pleasure in these resemblances; indeed it all seemed a mockery, his refinement, the way he unmistakably fitted into this family, into this room, filled with old furniture, a packet of Lee's letters on the table, preserved in oiled cloth, and the row of portraits, badly but impressively painted, that stared over the heads of the living family.

Mother pretended to sew, and gradually the others, tired of observing Harry's placid reading, occupied themselves, with the cross-word, or the radio, or a jig-saw puzzle which one of them had got for Christmas and still hadn't been able to assemble fully (they were in July). Any outsider would have found them a normal family group, spending a quiet evening.

But as the clock struck eleven-thirty, signal that in another quarter of an hour, more or less, the family would be going to bed, Harry shut his book abruptly and rose from his chair.

"I think I'll just take a little walk before turning in," he said.

Happily, he didn't seem to notice the general consternation expressed on every one of those blue-eyed, blond-crowned faces.

"Really, must you go out?" Mother said, seizing desperately at an excuse: "I thought we might play a game of hearts, if you've finished your reading."

"No hearts for me," Harry said. "Besides, Louise cheats."

"I do not." Louise was famous in the family for her cheating and for her indignation.

"Children," Mother commanded, "please."

And in this moment of confusion, Harry stepped through the open doors into the garden and was heard whistling as he opened the back gate into the street which led to the center of town.

As usual when Harry had left, as if by some unheard order, they put aside their occupations, their puzzles, their sewing, and began to speak of what they called his "illness' —whether for want of a more precise word, or for fear of one.

For, of course, it was not really an illness at all — these "attacks" as Mother sometimes referred to Harry's disappearances and their tragic results. The medical book in the library, from which the children years earlier had received their first and elaborately mistaken knowledge of sex (later to be corrected by practical, even abundant experience), when consulted now, proved to be deathly silent on the subject.

On one of these evenings, Louise had looked up the word in the dictionary and begun to read aloud the definition: "From the Old English **were-wulf.** A mythical beast—"

"Nonsense," Mother had interrupted, "Whatever he is, Harry is certainly not a mythical beast."

And so their researches had ended.

But not their discussion. On this evening, when Harry's whistling had died away, and the night was silent except for the buzz of an occasional mosquito, Douglas spoke up at once, stammering a little, as he sometimes did when excited, spluttering the thought he had bottled up inside himself all evening.

"I do, do think we should consult a doctor."

Mother nodded, hopeless and resigned, "I'm afraid that's impossible, Douglas. Dear Doctor Lyle would be quite useless, I'm sure, in this sort of thing. And at the same time, he would be so terribly offended if we called in anyone else. He's been treating the family for years; he was with your poor father . . ."

Mother paused respectfully. Then she concluded: "I'm afraid we'll just have to bear with Harry in this matter. I knew we never should have sent him North to college. I know his father—" pause —"would have wanted him to go to the University. But Harry had that silly idea about their drinking too much there. And there hasn't been a drunk in our family for generations. Not in the direct line, anyway."

And so the discussion came to its usual, inconclusive end. After a few more scattered remarks, they all went up to their beds. Though Louise swore she wouldn't be able to sleep until she heard Harry come back, shutting the gate carefully behind himself, humming softly under his breath: "crash through that line of blue, and send the backs on round the end..."

Mother had to speak a little sharply to Louise on more than one occasion, since the girl seemed to be comporting herself in a very self-centered manner, as if she were the only one involved in the unfortunate circumstance.

"The scandal, the shame of it," Louise had exclaimed one warm afternoon, "I just can't show my face in choir-practice..."

"I'm afraid my daughter is a very silly girl indeed," Mother reproved. "You most assuredly will go to choir-practice this evening and you will sing, as if nothing had happened. Though of course," she reflected, "your voice isn't exactly fine. Too bad you couldn't have got your voice from my side of the family. Your grandfather..."

Louise interrupted, "But everyone knows. I can't hold my head up."

"Absurd," Mother snapped, "What if everyone does know? You must simply act as if nothing had happened. You remember how the Tylers behaved when young Clyde was involved with that girl from the silk mill, right under the eyes of the whole town. And everyone admired the family so for carrying right on."

"But this is different," Louise insisted.

"It certainly is. At least Harry hasn't been near any of those common mill girls."

The aspect of the situation which most bothered Louise, which she had difficulty in explaining to Mother, was the uncertainty they lived in. The family enjoyed such a position in the town (it was named after their ancestor) that the other families were careful to make no reference to their misfortune, indeed went out of their way to see that the children were the first to be invited to any social affair, the most cordially greeted, the most highly praised.

And so the family never precisely knew what was happening. Bits of gossip, accidentally overheard, spoke of certain children, Negro or poor white, disappearing or being found with curious, unexplained teeth-marks; but Douglas insisted that this was just village chatter, the sort of thing the servants discussed, with no foundation, necessarily, in truth.

But even Douglas was concerned, as were the two smaller children, who listened in silence to the family discussions, without understanding clearly what Harry was doing. The summer was drawing to an end, the hot days of August had begun to sap everyone's energy and cheer, and the children thought of Harry's imminent return to college as the final date, before which certainly some tragedy would be accomplished.

And Mother, their pilot, their guide, just at this moment when her strong hand was needed to direct their destinies, took sick. A series of headaches caused her to lie in bed late in the morning, sleep badly at night, lose her appetite.

"You're just picking at your food," Louise said, "and cook did try to make that salad appetizing."

"Yes, Mother," Harry said. who seemed quite distressed about her state of

health, "you must keep up your strength."

"You are all so sweet, my dears," Mother replied, in a patient, dying voice, "but I just can't eat a thing."

So they watched with despair, as the salad was taken off, and she waved away the Bavarian cream, so white and cool-looking in the heat, and she went up to her room to rest, the shades drawn, all afternoon, until supper came, when the same scene would be repeated.

Harry was so solicitous of her that the others were encouraged by this sign, thinking that it would, as Louise said, "take him out of himself," and perhaps could be regarded as the beginning of the cure. The children were so worried about Mother finally that they ceased their surveillance of Harry, could not be sure whether or not he had been taking his walks and, in their new optimism, decided he had not.

So much greater was their alarm that morning when they went to call him and found his bed undisturbed.

"He's been out all night," Louise said, in a horrified whisper.

"This is the worst attack yet," Douglas said.

"We should tell Mother," one of the others suggested.

They knocked lightly at her door, so as not to disturb her in case she had been sleeping. But her voice, strangely healthy and strong, told them to come in.

She was lying in bed, wide awake, smiling, and oddly enough, picking her teeth (or, as Douglas thought later, sucking a small bone), and before they could say anything, the children noticed, lying on the floor, Harry's empty pyjamas.

Kenneth Koch

Poem

While stealing samples from the grocery store
We knew the green grass blew, and the cabs attempted —
O close to my heart, white days of some invention,
White didn't you know before?

It was a whale that swam, or a ring in the sink then,
The damp nickel among the white
Rainbows (Williams!), white didn't I
Know that the mints were going to check you like persons!

Sleet machines!
I approach you like a moth dizzy with materials,
Dick, Dick! public peaces of entertainment!
O lonely place-parking under the wonder-falls!

Did the police bend over the taste of peppermint
With the grace of ballet dancers? do the pumps renew?
White might I see you on the whoming rimway
At day and night, and yet win praise of you,

I'll fold my chair in the summer rain,

To Jean White.

IS NOTHING RESERVED FOR NEXT YEAR, NEWLYWEDS ON ARBOR DAY?

The rosy future
Is a sled all the furniture
You brought inside
What about the whoopee
Flowers and the chief drops

Slide out the window
The vampire the vacuum cleaner
The pocketbook the rags
The rugs I am smiling dear moustache
You are a Chinese laundry

In a garden of orange snow
Nor mind how far the gables go
Neither the red honesty
O the music's children
The gun's original behest

I smashed him
Smashed
The dark and darling flowers grow
Behind the living bells
"A sled is all the furniture"

But isn't cups
Cuckoos and formulas
The very fallen street of nuts?
Yes, here's perfumes
Habeas perfumes! My house!

Once, hound street of doors
They said you threw
Eloping ripeness upon the air
O yes, within my sweater
The rosy future

It ripens like cabs
I hope cigars
The yessing nine of an event
For youthful love the oranges
And furies.

Giorgio Caproni

FOUR POEMS from ANNIVERSARIO, a sonnet sequence

Now you know no more with what blare,
on the sandy beach, the clear sound
of the childish trumpets opens death
to my love! Now in the mourning
where you crumble day by day, you
bear no more your human grief—
you watch me, and abandoned
in subdued stupor you decline the keenest
memory. Other mornings on the sea—
barely alight! And the sound was even
and brazen that in subtle horns
penetrated our sleep: a sound
that the weather, still untainted, tied
to a few threads of hope if the Lighthouse
was toppled by the children's screams.

Perhaps you too will have tears
if struck one day at this instant, so
tenuous your face, you suffer the mild
return of this March that has hardly
shared our evil. New to your sojourn,
alone in the slumber of the evening
that has touched you, at some weak return
of my voice, you will open, lightly
to the pitying eyes. But your human
effigy, your shifting form in this dusk,
how it steals away with the scent
of the countryside! Nor does it last
longer than my extreme youth:
my vain chance lost at your walls.

Of yourself you have left only the grief
closed in the bones of the day where
you are so suddenly lacking—the veil
of sweat that smothers the squares, in which
already tired you slowed your steps towards the eternal
unlove. And at our bridges, courtyards,
the white arches askew in a sky
more colorless than the last face, the dear
flanks broken so young no one can bear
in memory: like wax if a hand presses
it—like the hollow sound of the blood
if evening falls, that no longer can lean
on the tired consent of your shoulder, light, broken.

A breath of grass will suffice, a wild
movement of the evening air, and your name
will persist no longer, already dispersed
in the sigh of the day. Like that time
you pressed, joking, your hand's dear warmth
to the marble—or when your lightsome
blood, hardly breathed from your lips,
was spent on the poplars' hair in a vague
blush of breeze: and I felt the ache
of your long surfeiting in distant,
deluded love, and you the hurt
of not being alone in the clear
prescience of your farewell; you serene, then.

Translated by William Fense Weaver

QUATTRO SONETTI di GIORGIO CAPRONI

Ora tu non sai più con che clamore,
sulla sabbia marina, il suono chiaro
delle trombe infantili apre al mio amore
la morte! Ora nel lutto in cui rovini
giorno per giorno, il tuo umano dolore
non reggi più -- tu mi guardi, e declini
abbandonata in sommesso stupore
il ricordo più acuto. Altri mattini
sul mare -- appena in luce! Ed era eguale
e incauto il suono che in tube sottili
penetrava nel sonno: un suono quale
il tempo, ancora illeso, a pochi fili
di speranza legava se il Fanale
già s'abbatteva agli squilli puerili.

Forse anche tu avrai lacrime se un giorno
colpita a quest'istante, sul tuo viso
così leggero patirai il ritorno
mite di questo marzo che ha diviso
appena il nostro male. Al tuo soggiorno
nuova, sola nel sonno della sera
che ti ha toccato, a un debole ritorno
della mia voce t'aprirai, leggera
negli occhi di pietà. Ma la tua umana
effigie, la tua labile figura
di questo vespro, come s'allontana
con l'odore dell'agro! Nè più dura
della mia estrema gioventù: una vana
occasione perduta alle tue mura.

Hai lasciato di te solo il dolore
chiuso nell'ossa dei giorni cui manchi
così improvvisa -- il velo di sudore
che soffoca le piazze, ove già stanchi
allentasti i tuoi passi al disamore
eterno. E ai nostri ponti, e agli atrii, e ai bianchi
archi travolti in un cielo incolore
più dell'ultimo viso, i cari fianchi
spezzati tanto giovani al ricordo
nessuno sosterrà: come la cera
se la mano la stringe -- come il sordo
suono del sangue se cade la sera
che non s'appoggia più al trafitto accordo
della tua spalla crollata leggera.

Basterà un soffio d'erba, un agitato
moto dell'aria serale, e il tuo nome
più non resisterà, già dissipato
nel sospiro del giorno. Sarà come
quando, per giuoco, cedevi l'amato
calore della mano al marmo -- come
quando il tuo sangue leggero, alitato
appena dal tuo labbro, sulle chiome
dei pioppi si esauriva in un rossore
vago di brezza: e io sentivo la pena
di quel lungo tuo eccedere in amore
disilluso e lontano, tu la pena
di non essere sola nel nitore
d'un presagio d'addio -- tu ormai serena.